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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CAR (BENT)  
NSC FOR SHANNON  
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD AND J7 (RHANNAN)

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: DEMARCH DELIVERED: WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRAVEL  
INITIATIVE

REF: STATE 61416

1. Responding to reftel request, Charge on April 5 communicated talking points by telephone to Gilbert Scott, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Security, and to Barbara James, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry Tourism. Both were interested in the issue and appreciated the advance notice of the impending deadline. Scott commented that requiring Americans to travel with machine-readable passports instead of birth certificates would make it easier for Jamaican immigration officials to use their newly implemented automated entry/exit system. James said that she would pass the information along to Aloun Assamba, Minister of Industry and Tourism.

2. Also on April 5, Poloff conveyed same talking points by phone and fax to Ann Scott, Caribbean and Americas Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. Scott accepted the information and indicated that she would review the details of the initiative. She also registered her concern for the impact the initiative would likely have on Jamaica's important tourism industry. Scott questioned whether a public campaign would promote the new travel initiative to U.S. citizens. She offered that this would be important because it is her impression, based on the number of tourists who travel to Jamaica each year with only birth certificates and drivers licenses, that Americans are generally reluctant to acquire passports, especially compared with Jamaicans, who commonly use passports as a form of identification. Scott was initially confused when contacted, pointing out that the Summit of the Americas is currently discussing a Western Hemisphere Transport Initiative (WHTI).  
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